1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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accompanying photograph. The Katab do not, like the Kare-kare, etc., in the north, bury their grain as a normal proceeding, but in bygone days if they expected to be raided they concealed their grain in decanter-shaped pits somewhat resembling the graves in which they bury their dead. These pits were dried with wood fires, and the narrow mouth was blocked with a stone which was plastered over with mud.

Apart from agriculture the Katab have few means of adding to their income. For their pottery they are dependent on their Ataka neighbours. There is no weaving or dyeing of cloth. Their baskets are woven by women from the ribs of palm branches, and the women also fashion the *oyam* or tray-shaped adornment worn on the buttocks. (It is made of palm fronds, the "stalk" being a piece of bamboo.) The waterproof capes and coverings for the women's loads are, however, woven by the men (from palm fronds). There is a certain amount of petty trade carried on by the women on their own or their husband's behalf. It takes the form of the sale of excess supplies of millet and other crops, of firewood, and of the beans which every married woman grows on her own account. With the proceeds of the sale of her beans a Katab woman usually adds to the number of her goats.

During the dry season the men engage in hunting drives with their Kaje, Chawai, and Morwa neighbours. Of big game there is none, but the smaller antelopes are still to be found. Hares, jerboa, iguana, rats, field-mice, etc., are also sought, and the Katab employ dogs to assist them in the chase. The usual rule applies that the man whose arrow first entered the animal, however slightly, is entitled to the quarry. Disputes frequently arise on this matter, but every man knows his own arrow, either by the length of the shaft, or binding, or by the fact that he had removed one of the ears of the arrow-head or had cut private marks on the shaft. Custom requires a successful hunter to hand over at once to the priest of the kindred any of the smaller game, but he receives back a larger share than anyone else; in the case of the larger game he is entitled to help himself before giving anything to the priest. It may be added that in former times the hunting battues were sometimes made the occasion for shooting a rival, especially the abductor of one's wife. There are also fishing battues, traps and nets being

583 595 never contract a secondary marriage. (Polygyny is also practised among members of the Katab Group.)

582 (*b*) *Prohibition of Secondary Marriage Within the Local Group:* The local group (hamlet or village), whether or not its males form a single clearly defined kin-group (clan, sub-clan, or lineage), is invariably a group within which secondary marriage cannot be sought. Similarly, lineage and sub-clan always constitute such groups. In some cases, when the large-scale kin-group, the exogamous unit ("clan"), is large and comprises a large number of local groups (and lineages), secondary marriage within the exogamous unit may be enjoined, i.e., a man is encouraged by public opinion to take as secondary wife only the wife of a fellow clansman, the member of a different lineage and village, and of a different sub-clan. If the clan is very small, however, the whole clan may be designated the "wife-stealing" unit.

587 (*c*) *Inheritance of Grandfather's Wives:* As Meek remarks, such is "necessarily of rare occurrence," but appears to be permitted among all tribes of the Group. All save Ikulu recognize also inheritance of father's widows, and it may be that both junior and senior levirate are almost universal.

(v) *Religious Practices: Head-Hunting*

794 Connected apparently to some extent with secondary marriage is the "dodo" cult known among Katab proper, Kachichere, Kagoma, Kagoro, Kaje, and perhaps others of the Group as *obwai* (*abwai*). It appears to differ little in those communities for which descriptions of it are available; in many of its details, too, it seems to be virtually identical with the *dodo* cult of the Kadara of Kufana, Kajuru District, described by Smith, which may be related to the tradition of Kajuru-Kadara domination of part or all of the Katab area at some period in pre-Fulani times.

721 [554] Head-hunting was widely practised among the Katab peoples, as among many of their neighbours, Aten, Irigwe, Chawai, and others. The taking of a head apparently gave a man the status of elder and was always the occasion of ritual: captured skulls were preserved. It seems that wars were not infrequent between and among members of the Group, but within the Group each member apparently respected the dead of certain other members (the Kagoro, for example, took Ataka and Kaje heads, but never Moroa or Katab proper), and there is every indication that the favoured game of all members was Fulani and Hausa.

ECONOMY[9a]

Occupations: Division of Labour

433 462 Katab are primarily farmers; the bulk of the farm work appears to be done by males,[9] though women, who may help with the planting and harvest, carrying the crops from the farm to the compound, maintain their own small garden plots at the back of their huts. Livestock (see below) is largely the property of women and is tended by children. Men keep bees (in hives in tall trees in the bush) and export, through the medium of Hausa traders, quantities of desiccated honey (resembling coke cinders) as far afield as Kano and Yerwa (Maiduguri). According to all observers, there are few crafts; women weave coarse wickerwork baskets and also the *oyam*, technically an article of considerable refinement; men produce checked or twilled palm-fibre rain-capes and basket-covers, and in recent years appear to have adopted the characteristically Ikulu mat industry (see below). The chief item of wood carving is the woman's head-board (it is not clear whether the *obwai* wears a mask of wood). A variety of musical instruments are produced, but there is

[9a] This section refers particularly to Katab of Zangon Katab District.

[9] Wielding the heavy spurred hoe, the effect of which in operation reminds one somehow of both the spade and the simple plough; see plate 5, p. 45 of *Tribal Studies*, II.

2: Gunn E-4 (no date) 1956 FF38 Katab FF38

nowhere any suggestion of specialization, each man generally making his own, with the possible exception of drums, which are often produced by men regarded more as ritual specialists than as craftsmen in wood. One of the chief occupations of women (apart from household duties) is petty trade, which, according to Meek, is carried on by the women on their own or their husbands' behalf. It takes the form of "the sale of excess supplies of millet and other crops, of firewood, and of beans. . . ." For their weapons and tools and cloth, Katab appear to be largely, if not entirely, dependent on Hausa craftsmen in the area, for their pottery on their Ataka neighbours in Moroa Independent District. Hunting—in the absence of any considerable quantity of large game—is carried on rather as recreation (ritualized) than as an economic activity. Sylvan products in general—excepting palm-fibre and (if so classed) honey—are not exploited commercially to any extent, though both locust-bean and shea-nut trees are found in some quantity in the Katab tribal area.

Land Tenure: Crops

According to Cole, the Katab have little, if any, spare land. "All land in their area is claimed by some individual or family as his or their farm or fallow." Land hunger has apparently not yet set in; land can still be obtained freely on loan if one's inherited lands are insufficient. To secure a loan, a man brews and offers a special pot of beer to a landowner with fields (or fallow) to spare, who will normally accept the "gift" and grant the loan. Cole notes that "whereas in the past loans would never be for a specific duration, nowadays a loan is made for a specific period either for one, two or three years, after which the borrower would be offered another field, if this were available. . ." Sale, pledging, leasing or renting, on the other hand, are unknown. The complete right of the user and the passing on of his right are acknowledged, but no transaction which would deprive relatives and inheritors of this right is recognized. Examination of all available evidence fails to reveal any basic qualitative difference between what is termed "family," and what is termed "individual" tenure.

The extent of the average amount of land under cultivation appears to have remained more or less constant, at least since the Brice-Smith reassessment of 1922. He reported five acres as the average cultivated by the adult male: Meek reported the average acreage as "ranging from four to six"; Barnicott (1933) "the comparatively large area of eight acres" per family; Elliot (1943) "roughly an acre per adult male" in the "home farm" adjacent to the compound, "then, anything up to four miles away in the open country around the village," fields of undisclosed extent. Unfortunately, no figure for fallow per adult male is available.

The figure of *c.* 4 acres per adult male appears to be low,[10] but, as already indicated, it is not to be regarded as evidence of over-population; it does tend, however, to corroborate all reports that the soil of the area is extremely fertile. In the "household garden," according to Elliot, the following crops may be grown; beans,[11] *gwaza*, sweet potatoes, cassava, maize, okra, *gaula* tomatoes, tobacco, *rama*

[10] In the Birom Tribal Area of Plateau, where the soil is poor, Davies has estimated that three acres per adult factor (male or female, presumably) is minimal for subsistence. (Among the Birom, however, pressure on the land is, in some areas, extreme: at least two Birom Village-areas, and probably others, have in fact less than the minimum.) It may be noted that Brice-Smith reported the average acreage worked by the Hausa farmer in Zangon Katab District as four acres, that is, 20% smaller than the Katab average in 1922. This difference was attributed not to superior farming methods (especially since "those who can afford it hire pagan labour to till their plots") but to the fact that the Hausa domiciled in the District were primarily traders and craftsmen.

[11] Beans are, apparently, of some special significance. Early investigators declared them to be a staple crop, and the chief article of diet. It is the "home farm" or "household garden," apparently, which Meek designates "the women's bean gardens": "Every Katab woman has a farm of broad beans at the back of her hut grown on trellis-work. . . . Every married woman grows [beans] on her own account. With the proceeds of the sale of her beans a Katab woman usually adds to the number of her goats."